# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:908
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2001
MEETING WITH EU DELEGATION OVER AGRICULTURAL EXPORT
C. SREENIVAASAN;MAHBOOB ZAHEDI;PUTTASWAMY GOWDA;SUNIL KHAN

**Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:**

(a)whether a meeting between the Representatives of India and the Chief Commissioner of European Union was held on agricultural export;

(b)if so, the details thereof;

(c)whether the issues for retaining duty free quota of basmati rice imports and to restore the quota for duty free sugar exports were also raised by India;

(d)if so, the response of European Union;

(e)whether the European Union have made the quality assurance standards very high to make the agricultural products from third world countries including India unacceptable; and

(f)if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to resolve the issues?

## Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ( SHRI MURASOLI MARAN )

(a) to (d) : Yes, Sir. Mr. Franz Fischler, Commissioner for Agriculture of the European Union (EU)visited India in February 2001 and had discussions with the Government and trade/industry representatives on various multilateral as well as bilateral issues relating to agriculture including the issues relating to export of basmati rice and sugar. European Commission took note of India`s concerns for appropriate consideration on issues relating to export of basmati rice and sugar.

(e) to (f) Exporters of agricultural products in India find it difficult to meet the very high sanitary and phyto sanitary(SPS) standards as have been prescribed in European Union member countries. This issue of very high sanitary and phyto sanitary standards and lack of harmonisation of standards within EU member countries and with the international standards has been raised by India with the European Commission several times in various fora including in the Indo-EC Joint Commission as well as in the WTO in the Committee on SPS measures and in the year 2000 Trade Policy Review of EUFurther, the Government agencies like Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA and Export Inspection Council (EIC) have been actively engaged in sensitising the exporters about the various SPS standards and have also been extending technical and other assistance to them so as to make them conform to the prescribed standards.